This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application.

Listing of Claims:

1. (currently amended) A method for refining a user query, the method comprising:

grouping a plurality of terms into a search concept, the search concept being a category that represents a clustering of the terms;

examining a query log to determine to a number of times that each of the terms appears in the query log; and

calculating a relative popularity for the search concept by adding the number of times that each of the terms appears in the query log;

receiving a query from a user; and

mapping the user query to ~~one or more~~ the search concepts~~ each having a relative popularity determined by adding a number of popularity points to the search concept for each of a plurality of different query phrases that matches one of a plurality of key phrases associated with the search concept, wherein the number of popularity points is proportional to a number of times the query phrase appears in a query log; and~~

~~displaying a list of the search concepts associated with the query~~.

2. (currently amended) The method of claim 1, further comprising initiating, upon the user's request, a preferred query associated with ~~at least one of~~ the ~~one or more~~ search concept[[s]] to provide improved search results.

3. (currently amended) The method of claim [[1]] 35, wherein the one or more search concepts are popular search concepts and wherein their relative popularity can be used to order the displayed list.

4. canceled.

5. (currently amended) The method of claim 2, wherein initiating the preferred search query comprises selecting one of the ~~key phrases~~ terms associated with the concept ~~and having a greatest popularity for the concept within the query log as indicated by the~~

~~popularity points added to the matching concept as a result of the key phrase matching a query phrase~~ that has appeared a greatest number of times within the query log.

6-7. canceled.

8. (original) The method of claim 1, wherein the method is performed by execution of instructions stored on a computer-readable medium.

9. canceled

10. (currently amended) The method of claim [[9]] 34, further comprising automatically initiating a preferred query associated with at least one of the one or more search concepts to provide ~~the~~ a set of improved search results.

11. (previously presented) The method of claim 10, wherein the set of improved search results comprises one or more sub-sets of the set of improved search results, each sub-set associated with one of the search concepts and having a number of search results proportional to the relative popularity of the search concept.

12-13. canceled.

14. (currently amended) The method of claim 10, wherein automatically initiating the preferred search query comprises selecting, for each of the one or more search concepts associated with the preferred query, one of the ~~key phrases~~ terms associated with the concept ~~and having a greatest popularity for the concept within the query log as indicated by the popularity points added to the matching concept as a result of the key phrase matching a query phrase~~ that has appeared a greatest number of times within the query log.

15-17 canceled.

18. (withdrawn) A method comprising:

analyzing a plurality of queries from a plurality of users to identify two or more search concepts; and,

assigning a popularity value to the two or more search concepts based on the plurality of queries such that the relative popularity of the respective search concepts can be determined.

19. (withdrawn)The method of claim 18, wherein assigning the popularity value comprises adding a number of popularity points to the concept for each of a plurality of different query phrases that matches one of a plurality of key phrases associated with the concept and that is unique to the concept, the number of popularity points being proportional to a number of times the query phrase appears in a query log.

20. (withdrawn)The method of claim 18, wherein assigning the popularity value comprises apportioning a number of popularity points among two or more of the search concepts when a plurality of different query phrases match one of a plurality of key phrases associated with the two or more search concepts, wherein the number of popularity points is proportional to the number of times the query phrase appears in the query log.

21. (withdrawn)The method of claim 18, wherein the popularity value for a search concept is a function of the popularity points of that search concept and the popularity points of a most popular one of the search concepts.

22. (withdrawn)The method of claim 18, wherein the popularity value is based at least in part on past queries received from users.

23. (withdrawn)The method of claim 18, wherein the popularity value is based at least in part on a prediction of future queries that will be received from users.

24. (withdrawn)The method of claim 18, wherein the method is performed by execution of instructions stored on a computer-readable medium.

25. (withdrawn)A method comprising:

analyzing a plurality of queries from a plurality of users to identify at least one search concept; and,

determining a preferred search query for the at least one search concept, wherein the preferred search query is associated with a selected set of search results for the at least one search concept.

26. (withdrawn)The method of claim 25, wherein determining the preferred search queries comprises, for each of the at least one search concepts, selecting a key phrase uniquely associated with the concept and having a greatest popularity for the concept within the plurality of queries.

27. (withdrawn) The method of claim 25, wherein the method is performed by execution of instructions stored on a computer-readable medium.

28. (currently amended) A system comprising:

a search concept that is a category which represents a clustering of a plurality of terms; and

a server communicatively coupled with a client at which a user generates a query, wherein the server groups the terms into the search concept, examines a query log to determine a number of times that each of the terms appears in the query log, calculates a relative popularity for the search concept by adding the number of times that each of the terms appears in the query log, and maps the user query to ~~one or more~~ the search concepts ~~and returns to the client for display to the user a list of the search concepts each having a relative popularity determined by adding a number of popularity points to the search concept for each of a plurality of different query phrases that matches one of a plurality of key phrases associated with the search concept, wherein the number of popularity points is proportional to a number of times the query phrase appears in a query log~~.

29. (previously presented) The system of claim 28, wherein the server is a search engine and the client is a web browser.

30. (previously presented) The system of claim 28, wherein the server and the client are applications.

31. (withdrawn) A system comprising:

a database storing a plurality of queries from a plurality of users; and,

a server to analyze the plurality of queries to identify two or more search concepts, and assign a popularity value to the two or more search concepts based on the plurality of queries such that the relative popularity of the respective search concepts can be determined.

32. (withdrawn) The system of claim 31, wherein the server is a search engine.

33. (withdrawn) The system of claim 31, wherein the server is an application.

34. (new) The method of claim 1, comprising mapping the user query to one or more search concepts.

35. (new) The method of claim 34, further comprising displaying a list of the one or more search concepts.